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G U I D E L I N E - I N D I R E C T T R A V E L

APPENDIX I

A. MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE COSTS:

I. GENERAL

a. The maximum allowable travel and transportation expenses will depend upon the mode of travel authorized in the employee's travel order. If no mode of travel is specified in the travel order or if the travel order specified travel by "common carrier," the employee would be entitled to the constructive (lowest first-class) travel cost by the most expensive comparable mode(s) over a usually traveled route.

b. Employees may elect to travel via an indirect route utilizing lower than first-class accommodations and be reimbursed on the basis of the cost of minimum first-class accommodations (transportation including berths) via the most expensive comparable mode(s) of common carrier travel by a usually traveled route between the authorized points of origin and destination; provided, that the cost allowed shall in no case exceed allowable expenses actually incurred.

c. The overall cost to the Government may not exceed the total cost allowable for direct travel via the most expensive usually traveled route using lowest first-class accommodations as the basis for determining this cost.

d. Pertinent sections of the Standardized Government Travel Regulations are quoted below for the information and guidance of all concerned:

"Section 3.3. Indirect-route or interrupted travel.--
In case a person for his own convenience travels by an indirect route or interrupts travel by direct route, the extra expense will be borne by himself. Reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on such charges as would have been incurred by a usually traveled route...

Section 6.10. Indirect-route or interrupted travel.--
Where for traveler's personal convenience or through the taking of leave there is interruption of travel or deviation from the direct route, the per diem in lieu of subsistence allowed will not exceed that which would have been incurred on uninterrupted travel by a usually traveled route."

e. In view of paragraph 6.10 of the SGTR's and 5 U.S. Code 839, the Comptroller General (B-131381) has ruled that any savings in transportation costs may not be allowed against overclaims in per diem. Accordingly, payments for per diem and miscellaneous travel are limited to the amount of per diem and miscellaneous travel expenses which would have been paid had travel been performed via a usually traveled (direct) route.

f. Cost incurred on side trips (tourist or sight-seeing trips and "back-tracking") are not indirect travel expenses which will be considered in the computation of allowable indirect travel costs.

g. For purposes of this guideline, "indirect travel" deals only with that portion of the trip which is outside the continental limits of the United States.

II. SEA TRANSPORTATION

a. General

1. When sea transportation is authorized and utilized on the indirect route, the general rule is that the lowest first-class passage via a usually traveled (direct) route will be used in the computation of the allowable direct transportation cost; regardless of whether or not such reservations would have been available to the traveler.

2. Official Steamship Guides will be used as the basis for determining the price of lowest first-class accommodations on a usually traveled (direct) route.

3. It should be noted that on direct travel via sea, the employee is required to certify that the transportation used was the lowest first-class transportation available. (Whenever possible, the employee should obtain a statement to this effect from the carrier's agent.) On indirect travel via sea, the actual cost of accommodations utilized may be included in the total indirect cost computations regardless of the fact that the accommodations were or were not the lowest available.

b. Travel Via Foreign Vessel

1. The general rule is that when the authorized point of origin and destination are serviced by American vessels, American vessels will be used in the performance of either direct or indirect travel.

2. Costs incurred by travelers in connection with the use of a Foreign vessel will not be considered in the development of allowable indirect route travel costs when American vessels were available via the direct route. The Merchant Marine Act of 1936 (49 Stat. 2015) provides, in part:

"Any officer or employee of the United States traveling on official business overseas or to or from any of the possessions of the United States shall travel and transport his personal effects on ships registered under the laws of the United States where such ships are available, unless the necessity of his mission requires the use of a ship under a foreign flag; provided that the Comptroller General of the United States shall not credit any allowance for travel or shipping expenses incurred on a foreign ship in the absence of satisfactory proof of the necessity therefor."

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(Note: This law is equally applicable to the shipment of privately-owned vehicles.)

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3. [REDACTED] Paragraph 7c(3)(a)(1)(a) provides:

"Employees and accompanying dependents shall use a direct American ship if the use of such ship does not delay departure more than five days after the employee's date of readiness. If embarkation is delayed for personal convenience of taking leave en route, an American ship shall be used."

4. Employees traveling via foreign vessel do so at their own risk, since the showing of the necessity for use of foreign vessel rests with the traveler. Prior Headquarters authorization for use of foreign vessel should be required in doubtful cases.

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III. AIR TRANSPORTATION

a. When air transportation is utilized on the indirect route, the cost of first-class air via the direct route will be allowed in the constructive cost statement. For indirect or interrupted travel, the scheduled direct flight nearest to the actual time of the traveler's departure from his post of assignment will determine his entitlement to a berth. If the direct route schedule reflects flights of six (6) hours or more elapsed travel time after 9 p.m. (2100 hours), a berth as outlined in [REDACTED] Paragraph 7a(4) would be allowed in the constructive cost computation regardless of whether or not a berth was used on the indirect route. Published airline schedules will be used for the purpose of determining the elapsed time via the constructed direct flight.

b. Military personnel utilizing foreign commercial aircraft are to be guided by the requirements set forth in Joint Travel Regulations

IV. PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

a. Transportation by privately owned vehicles (POV) on a mileage basis (presently 10¢ per mile) will be allowed on the indirect route cost computation whenever such mode of transportation is authorized in the travel order as being more advantageous to the Government.

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b. In those instances where travel orders authorized travel via privately owned vehicle at not to exceed cost by common carrier, common carrier costs will be allowed in the constructive cost statement for that portion of the indirect route travel accomplished by POV.

c. It is determined to be more advantageous to the Government when three (3) or more persons who are authorized to travel at Government expense travel together by POV on a mileage basis over any part or all of the route between the authorized points of origin and destination. In such cases the travel expenses involved shall be paid on a mileage basis without the necessity of making a comparative cost statement. (For the purpose of this paragraph, two (2) children under twelve (12) years of age shall be considered as one person.)

V. GOVERNMENT TRANSPORTATION FURNISHED

Whenever Government transportation is furnished without cost to the traveler for any segment of travel on an indirect route, the lowest first-class rate for commercial transportation, over that segment of the trip, will be deducted from the maximum allowable direct route transportation cost.

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VII. UNFORESEEN OR UNAVOIDABLE DELAYS OCCURRING DURING INDIRECT TRAVEL

Once the employee commences travel by an indirect route for personal reasons and encounters delays or deviations from his selected route, all excess cost and time (leave) are charged to the traveler; notwithstanding, that such delays or deviations were unforeseen or unavoidable (Acts of God, illness, plane or vehicle trouble, accidents, changes of prior schedules, strikes, etc.).

B. MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE TRANSIT TIME:

I. GENERAL

a. Transit time is that time which would have elapsed had travel been performed by a direct or usually traveled route, utilizing the mode(s) of transportation authorized in the employee's travel order.

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b. For leave purposes, transit time will be based on travel time via a direct or usually traveled route on the comparable mode of transportation utilized via the indirect route. In other words, if an employee performs travel via an indirect route, and utilizes combined modes of transportation, his allowable transit time will be based on the comparable mode of transportation which he would have utilized via a direct or usually traveled route. However, steamship travel will not be included in the direct route computation unless steamship travel of more than three (3) days was utilized by the employee on the indirect route.

c. All excess transit time will be charged to leave (annual or compensatory) or leave without pay (INOP), as the case may be.

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